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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 001282

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/05/2017

TAGS: [IR](#) [AF](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [PREL](#) [NATO](#) [EZ](#)

SUBJECT: 2008 CZECH FOREIGN DEPLOYMENT BILL APPROVED

REF: A. PRAGUE 1191

[B.](#) PRAGUE 1207

Classified By: POL-ECON Counselor M. Dodman for reasons 1.4 b+d.

1.(C)Summary and Comment: On December 5, both chambers of the Czech Parliament approved the Government's proposal for foreign military operations in 2008. The resolution allows the deployment of up to 415 soldiers to Afghanistan, an increase from 2007's 224. 550 troops will continue Czech operations in Kosovo. Czech contributions to efforts in Iraq will decrease by mid year from 100 to 20. In the lower house, each deployment required a separate vote. Largely due to the growing potential for casualties, the Afghanistan vote was the most contentious, passing with only 125 votes, including 24 opposition members of parliament; as discussed in septel, this bodes well for next year's missile defense vote. The Senate passed the entire deployment package in a single vote of 46 to 3, with 7 abstentions. With approval by the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, no further action is required.
End Summary and Comment

Afghanistan

2.(SBU) Per Reftel A, the ceiling for troops in Afghanistan next year will increase to 415 soldiers. The Czechs will likely provide 180 troops for the new PRT in Logar, 90 troops for their field hospital, 20 at Kabul International Airport, an additional 10 soldiers for an Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team (OMLT) to work with the Afghanistan National Air Corps, helicopter detachment. They will also continue to support British forces in Helmand with 35 special military police. The number also includes up to 80 troops to help the Dutch in Uruzgan. 125 Deputies voted for the deployment, while 54 were against.

Iraq

3.(SBU) Per reftel A, the Czechs will maintain a ceiling of 100 troops in Iraq between January 1 and June 30, 2008. Starting on July 1, 2008, the ceiling for the rest of the year will be 20. Per ref B, the remaining 20 Czech troops are to be assigned to the NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I). In the Chamber of Deputies, 129 deputies voted in favor, with 45 against.

Kosovo, NATO Rapid Reaction Force, Bosnia, and Chad

4.(SBU) The Parliament also approved sending 550 troops to support the EU mission to Kosovo. In the lower house, the vote was 153 for and 25 against. The Deployment Resolution authorizes 100 troops for the NATO Rapid Reaction Force from January 1 to July 15, 2008. From July 1, 2008 to January 1, 2008, the number increases to 343. However, the Government must approve all operations involving these troops and notify both Chambers of Parliament. The Chamber of Deputies approved this proposal by a vote of 139 to 39. For Bosnia, the Parliament authorized deployment of up to five soldiers until

June 30, 2008, when the Czechs will cease support to the EUFOR Athena mission. In the Chamber of Deputies, the vote was 156 to 23. For Chad and the Central African Republic, Parliament approved sending three soldiers to support the EU mission to protect refugees from Darfur. The soldiers can be deployed for up to 60 days. The vote in the Chamber of Deputies was 147 in favor to 31 against this deployment

Possible Future Deployment of Special Operations Forces

¶5. (SBU) As in past years, the Government may seek parliamentary approval sometime next year to deploy their special operations forces (SOF). Both Afghanistan and Chad are currently under discussion for SOF deployment in 2008.
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